

Remarks

Ambassador Stephen D. Mull

WIEMBA Graduation

University of Warsaw

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Congratulations to all of you graduating today on your hard work and dedication in reaching this milestone- a master's degree in business administration.

And let me also express my appreciation to all those associated with the University of Warsaw-Illinois Executive MBA Program that is a model of educational cooperation between Poland and the United States and sets the standard for business education in this country.

The marketing, finance, and strategic management courses offered by Polish and American professors enable you to develop innovative approaches to real-life business problems in all their complexity.

And I cannot think of a better moment for you to graduate from this Executive MBA Program offered by jointly by two outstanding universities that link Poland and the United States.

The skills that you have acquired in understanding and solving international business problems and the benefits of a truly transatlantic education prepare you for what I believe will be a new era in European-American business relations.

So together with my congratulations, I would like to set forth a challenge for you as the U.S. and EU in July begin negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership that if successfully concluded will boost economic growth and create jobs on both continents.

The U.S.-EU economic relationship is already the world's largest, accounting for one-third of total goods and services trade and nearly half of global economic output, but the proposed partnership would further open EU and U.S. markets.

The agreement, we hope, will result in the full elimination of tariffs, make substantial progress in reducing non-tariff barriers, and strengthen rules-based investment while continuing high levels of health safety, and environmental protection.

Our political leaders have signaled a strong commitment to achieving a successful agreement, but it will ultimately be up to business people to prove its value and to make it a reality that improves the lives of Americans, Poles and Europeans.

So the challenge that I set for you is this: in Poland, become the leaders of this revolution in international trade and business.

As barriers come down between the US and the EU (including Poland), opportunities will proliferate, and this process will require the understanding and background that your education and background have provided you.

There is no better group of businessmen and women than you and your fellow graduates from this executive MBA program to take advantage of the future transformation in transatlantic trade and investment.

You are positioned to champion changes in the business climate that will bring Poland and the United States even closer together. Your generation have the opportunity both to lead this revolution and to reap the benefits of a more open and transparent system linking Europe and America.

Poland's extraordinary economic progress over the past 20 years has been based on the general principles of free trade, open markets and the rule of law. Those concepts, which are at the heart of the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, will continue to provide the foundation for future economic growth.

Poland currently has the 6th largest economy in the EU and is the largest U.S. partner in Central Europe, but it accounts for less than 2% of U.S. trade with the European Union. Even though trade between the U.S. and Poland has significantly increased in the last few years, trade with Poland only amounts to only 1.3% of our trade with the entire European Union.

So I challenge you today to find new ways for Poland and the United States to take mutual advantage of our vast markets and growing economies. It is up to you to work within your businesses and professions to expand our bilateral trade and investment because I believe that the future promises an increasingly important U.S.-Polish and U.S.-European relationship, as we adapt together to complex global changes. Use your innovative ideas, entrepreneurial spirit, and global outlook to your advantage.

Let me also mention one other related – to help break down the barriers that sometimes exist between academia and business. In the United States, partnerships between universities and businesses are responsible for developing and implementing new innovative technologies that create jobs and energize entire communities. For instance, in the so-called research triangle of North Carolina, researchers at the state university there have spun off about 100 companies that have attracted \$1.5 billion in investment capital, especially in the fields of health care and biotechnology. But these kinds of partnerships are flourishing all over the United States in almost every business field. You have the real-life managerial skills to make this happen in Poland as well. So do not leave academia behind today as you graduate; instead, try to find new ways that companies and universities can cooperate – the people of Poland will benefit.

I wish you every success in your managerial careers and I hope that you will take up the challenge to bring Poland and the United States closer together in a more prosperous future for all of us.

Thank you very much.

Drafted: CScharf